

Press Release – How to Reduce Electronics Waste
For Immediate Release
Date: _____

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e-Cycling - How to Reduce Electronics Waste

You can reduce the environmental impact of electronics at the end of their useful life through reuse and donation, recycling, and buying greener electronic products.

Reusing and Donating Electronics

Preventing waste in the first place is usually preferable to any waste management option...including recycling. Donating used (but still operating) electronics for reuse extends the lives of valuable products and keeps them out of the waste stream for a longer period of time. Reuse, in addition to being an environmentally preferable alternative, also benefits society. By donating your used electronics, you allow schools, nonprofit organizations, and lower-income families to obtain equipment that they otherwise could not afford.

Before donating your computer or other electronics, make sure the equipment is reusable. Donation organizations have limited or in many case no resources or employees to diagnose and repair hardware. A functional, working system - especially with monitor, wiring, and software licenses—is a lot more useful and requires less upgrading than a nonworking, incomplete computer. The most appropriate donation organization for computers can vary from area to area. In some cases, the most viable donation organization might be a charity, but in other areas, the appropriate donation organization might be the local school district or materials exchange

Recycling Electronics

If donation for reuse or repair is not a viable option, households and businesses can send their used electronics for recycling. Recyclers recover more than 100 million pounds of materials from electronics each year. Recycling electronics helps reduce pollution that would be generated while manufacturing a new product and the need to extract valuable and limited virgin resources. It also reduces the energy used in new product manufacturing.

Many municipalities offer computer and electronics collections as part of household hazardous waste collections, special events, or other arrangements. In addition, public and private organizations have emerged that accept computers and other electronics for recycling. Depending on where you live and the amount of equipment you have, the best recycling option might be a county recycling drop-off center, TV repair shop, charitable organization, electronics recycling company, or even your local electronics retailer, which might collect used products and send them to a recycler.

Buying Green.

Environmentally responsible electronics use involves not only proper end-of-life disposition of obsolete equipment, but also purchasing new equipment that has been designed with environmentally preferable attributes. Think about this when purchasing new equipment, and ask

your retailer or electronics supplier about environmentally preferable electronics. Households, companies, and governmental organizations can encourage electronics manufacturers to design greener electronics by purchasing computers and other electronics with environmentally preferable attributes and by requesting take-back options at the time of purchase. Look for electronics that:

- Contain fewer toxic constituents.
- Use recycled materials in the new product.
- Are energy efficient
- Are designed for easy upgrading or disassembly.
- Use minimal packaging.
- Offer leasing or take-back options.

e-Cycle. A little makes a big difference.

To learn more about electronics reuse and recycling in Massachusetts go to www.mass.gov/dep/ or www.earth911.org